

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 304593

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, EPAP, CS

SUBJECT: 1977 MEAT PROGRAM: COSTA RICAN REACTIONS

REF: SAN JOSE 5838 AND 5862

1. SEPTELS PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE STATUS OF MEAT IMPORT
NEGOTIATIONS.

2. THE EMBASSY IS AWARE THAT U.S. FLEXIBILITY IN DISTRI-
BUTING COUNTRY ALLOCATIONS IS SEVERELY LIMITED BY (1) OUR
RESPONSIBILITIES AND INTERESTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, NOT
JUST IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE AND (2) THE NEED TO SECURE
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THE AGREEMENT OF ALL MAJOR EXPORTERS IF A VOLUNTARY
RESTRAINT SYSTEM IS TO BE ESTABLISHED IN LIEU OF UNILATERALLY

IMPOSED QUOTAS. AS IN THE PAST, HISTORICAL PERFORMANCE PROVIDED THE BASIS FOR A GENERALLY ACCEPTABLE ALLOCATION FORMULA FOR THE 1977 PROGRAM. EVEN QUOTAS, WHICH PRESENT SERIOUS PROBLEMS IN TRADE POLICY AND JEOPARDIZE OUR OBJECTIVES IN THE MTN, MUST BE BASED ON HISTORICAL PATTERNS TO COMPLY WITH GATT COMMITMENTS AND US LAW.

3. IN THE CASE OF PANAMA, THE USG WAS ABLE IN THIS NEGOTIATION TO CORRECT AN ANOMALY BUILT INTO PREVIOUS PROGRAMS BY THE USE OF THE 1973/1974 BASE PERIOD. NO OTHER

COUNTRY WAS SIMILARLY DISADVANTAGED BY THE ACCEPTED-ALLOCATION FORMULA NOR, GIVEN THE SIZE OF COUNTRY SHARES, COULD A SMALL AMOUNT OF FLEXIBILITY HAVE DONE NEARLY AS MUCH FOR ANY COUNTRY (OTHER THAN HAITI) HAD SIMILAR ANOMALIES IN FACT EXISTED. NEVERTHELESS W" RECOGNIZED THE POSSIBILITY THAT SPECIAL TREATMENT OF PANAMA, EVEN TO CORRECT A DEFECT IN THE ALLOCATION SYSTEM, COULD BE MISUNDERSTOOD. THEREFORE, WE SOUGHT AND RECEIVED THE ADVANCE APPROVAL OF THE CHIEF OF THE COSTA RICAN DELEGATION, WHO EXERCISED AN INFORMAL LEADERSHIP ROLE AMONG LATIN DELEGATIONS, BEFORE WE MENTIONED A FIGURE OF 5 MILLION POUNDS TO PANAMA.

4. THE EMBASSY MAY DRAW ON THE FOREGOING, IN ADDITION TO MATERIAL PREVIOUSLY AVAILABLE TO THE EMBASSY, IN RESPONDING TO ANY FURTHER CRITICISM OF THE 1977 MEAT IMPORT PROGRAM.

5. FYI - AMBASSADOR SILVA TOLD DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY GRUNWALD TUESDAY IN CONFIDENCE THAT, WHILE HE WAS NOT HAPPY WITH THE COSTA RICAN ALLOCATION, HE WAS PLEASED THAT THE OUTCOME DEPARTED FROM ALLOCATIONS DETERMINED STRICTLY ON THE BASIS OF A HISTORICAL PERFORMANCE FORMULA AND THAT THE PANAMANIAN PROBLEM HAD BEEN REMEDIED. END FYI. KISSINGER

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